

27 April 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Personnel

SUBJECT : PDP and APP (With Side Reference to [redacted] talk
to ASPA Members, 24 April 1973)

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1. The value of man-weeks or months spent in developing a basic idea or system can be lost in minutes if the idea is superficially considered or if it is brought up at the wrong time. Likewise, a policy carefully drawn and fully accepted can remain a paper in the file, for lack of progress checks by top management. I think we are at the point where failure to take action on PDP and APP may cause them to flounder and where failure to take the right action could cause them to abort. A review of the bidding is in order.

2. There is a good case to be made for doing or saying nothing about PDP at this time. In a period of excess personnel reductions and forthcoming ceiling cuts, the atmosphere is not conducive to pushing a positive program for improving individual employees and the quality of personnel management. To some, action on this program would appear to be hypocritical; to others, the work entailed would be burdensome when they have more pressing problems. Unless the Deputies can see that PDP is needed now more than ever, they are apt to resist or withhold active support from this program.

3. In commenting on [redacted] paper, I suggested the Executive Secretary of the Agency Management Committee should be asked to check with the Deputies on general progress with PDP since its approval in January.

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a. If this is not done, months may go by with little if anything accomplished at the working and planning levels. As you know, the policy calls for a DD review with Career Service Heads after June.

b. Re the disinclination of offices to act on PDP when reductions are an abiding concern, it should be noted that significant increases in separations at all levels, now and upcoming, will intensify the need for systematic development of individuals who will be moving up on an accelerated basis.

c. Last week, [redacted] Deputy Director, OMB told ASPA members what the principal management thrusts will be by OMB and the Administration -- running the Government by objectives;

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increasing the responsiveness of the Executive Branch to the President; following up on program results, in carrying out objectives; and executive development. If we need any further urging to stay with the implementation of PDP, I believe his comment on ED is it. I consider it interesting that an article in this week's Washington Post indicated OMB management teams are being organized to periodically look in on management developments within Federal agencies. Obviously, OMB is serious about ED, and we cannot afford a record of inaction. Moreover, I am not sure that the Director would be understanding or sympathetic, if an external review finds us wanting.

4. The case for saying or doing nothing is less evident with respect to APP, inasmuch as it is a pending item in the agenda of the Agency Management Committee. Endorsements and recurring support of the APP have grown, witness recent references to it by the IG, DD/M&S, and the Executive Secretary, AMC. The latter most recently advocated APP and PDP as desirable systems, in his remarks on [redacted] paper and the Inspector General's survey of the Career Services. My concern is the distinct possibility that APP may receive short shrift because of other pressing problems or the sheer weight of the AMC agenda. STATINTL

5. It is essential to the proper review of APP by the Deputies that they understand Table 1 is the vehicle (already tested) for deciding upon the most appropriate competing personnel choices under conditions of reduced manpower resources. Given reduced manpower levels of whatever dimension, the other Tables of APP provide means for projecting and reviewing, within the chain of command, specific personnel activity levels and priorities. I believe it important to pass to Mr. Colby the importance of emphasizing this fact in any consideration of APP; if we don't, APP may be decided on grounds of administrative expediency and we may lose a process that cannot be reclaimed for the foreseeable future.

[redacted]
Chief, Plans Staff

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